

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) PROGRAM**

2007 SRTS APPLICATION GUIDE

Introduction:

In 2006 the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) launched a new program entitled Safe Routes to School (SRTS). The initiative is aimed at making bicycling and walking to school safe and routine. Federal funds are made available to help create an environment where school children in the 8th grade or younger can get to school the way their grandparents did. Americans are realizing that traffic congestion, fuel consumption and air pollution near our schools, coupled with growing health and obesity concerns, make walking and biking to school a low-cost, attractive alternative.

School principals, school district officials, private school officials, local transportation officials and not-for-profit organizations are encouraged to work together to apply for funding under the SRTS program. Funds may be for infrastructure projects that improve the “built environment”, or non-infrastructure activities that educate children, school officials and parents, encourage bicycling or walking to school or enforce safety for children on their daily commute to and from school.

Funds will only be available on a reimbursement basis for approved projects or activities. All applications received by INDOT will be reviewed and evaluated by SRTS Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from INDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), the Indiana Department of Health (ISDH) and a representative from one of Indiana’s Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO’s). Recommendations from the Advisory Committee will go to the INDOT Commissioner for final selection. Applicants will be informed of which proposals are selected and the list of approved projects and activities will be posted on INDOT’s Web page: <http://www.state.in.us/dot/div/programs/saferoutes/>.

To find out more about the national Safe Routes to School Program go to: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/> and <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>. Please contact Michael O’Loughlin at INDOT at moloughlin@indot.in.gov or visit the INDOT SRTS Web page to find out more about Indiana’s Safe Routes to School Program.

Please be aware that this guide will continue to evolve as clarifications and additions are included. Always note the edition date at the top of SRTS Guide to make sure you are using the latest version.

WHAT IS NEW FOR 2007?

- Proper signatures are now required by highest elected official, school principals, school district superintendent, metropolitan planning organization director and INDOT district director as appropriate for the individual application.
- A clear map is now required, showing existing and proposed safe routes, target schools, street names and other significant local features.
- Sample unit costs for SRTS infrastructure projects are posted on INDOT's SRTS Web page to help improve cost estimating.
- A shift in emphasis from facility construction to address comprehensive Safe Routes to School planning that includes encouragement, education, evaluation, engineering and enforcement.
- Increased emphasis on expanding partnerships to establish community-wide support. Partners should include local government, school officials, teachers, law enforcement, parents, students, local businesses and local not-for-profit organizations.
- Surveys of how students travel to and from school and parent surveys about bicycling and walking to school are now required. Surveys and instructions are posted on INDOT's SRTS Web page.
- Increased emphasis on evaluating relevant school policies that contribute to or detract from proposed SRTS efforts.
- Increased emphasis on linking with related local efforts intended to increase walking and bicycling in the community.
- Clear projections of the numbers of children walking and bicycling to school as a result of proposed SRTS activities and projects will now be required.
- SRTS applications must be for at least \$5000.

SECTION 1 - General Information

- The official 2007 application deadline is 3:00pm June 29, 2007...FIRM. Applications must be delivered to the Safety & Mobility Office of INDOT in Indianapolis by this date and time or clearly show a June 29th postmark.
- All applications shall be typed and 20 pages or less, including all attachments.
- Be succinct and direct in answering all questions. Vague and wordy responses may hide the meaning and cause a lower relative value to be placed on the application.
- Applications should conform to an 8 ½ x 11 inch format, but maps may be 11 inches x 17 inches and folded.

- Do not attach front or back covers to the application. A cover letter, however, should accompany each application.
- Each construction (infrastructure improvement) project or (non-infrastructure) activity shall be submitted as a separate application.
- Please prepare 5 hard copies of each application, including the attachments.
- Remember to save a copy of your application, including the completed signature page, for your own use.
- Original and three copies should be submitted to:
 Indiana Department of Transportation
 Division of Planning, Office of Safety & Mobility
 IGCN Room 958
 100 N. Senate Avenue
 Indianapolis, IN 46204
- The fifth copy of your application should be sent to your INDOT District Local Public Agency Coordinator. The state is divided into six districts as illustrated on the agency's website: <http://www.state.in.us/dot/div/traffic/districts/index.html>. Go to this website to locate the correct address.

SECTION 1A - Infrastructure Project Cost Estimate

Cost estimates should be as accurate as possible. The cost estimate you provide in Section 1A will establish the upper limit of funding available for your proposed project if it is selected. Based on experience, INDOT has provided sample unit costs on the Safe Routes Web page to provide a starting point for estimating infrastructure project costs.

SECTION 1B – Non-Infrastructure Activity Cost Estimate

Cost estimates should be as accurate as possible. The cost estimate appearing in Section 1B will establish the upper funding limit for your non-infrastructure activity if approved.

SECTION 2 - Application Signature(s)

Proposed infrastructure projects that would be located entirely on the grounds of one private or public school require only the endorsement of the school principal. If multiple schools serving grades K-8 are intended to benefit from proposed improvements, the appropriate school district superintendent needs to endorse the application.

Proposed infrastructure projects located partly or entirely off of school grounds require the endorsement of the highest relevant town, city or county officials. Schools that serve grades 9 – 12 are considered secondary beneficiaries and are not required to endorse the application, however the support of local high schools is favorable.

In addition, within Indiana's 14 urbanized areas (where the population is at least 50,000) the director of the responsible metropolitan planning organization (MPO) must endorse SRTS applications for non-infrastructure or infrastructure projects. Is your school(s) located in an area with an MPO? For a list of Indiana MPOs and their addresses, go to: <http://www.in.gov/dot/div/programs/saferoutes/mpo-contacts.pdf>.

Infrastructure projects that propose construction along a State, U.S. or Interstate Highway must have the endorsement of the appropriate INDOT District Director. A map of INDOT's Highway Districts is available on our web site: <http://www.state.in.us/dot/div/traffic/districts/index.html>.

SRTS project applicants may have one or more partners to assist in the successful completion of the project. For example, a local YMCA or fire station may partner with a school or school district to hold a bike rodeo to encourage safe bike riding practices. Partners may be non-profit organizations or other government agencies. The grant applicant is responsible for the accuracy of any cost estimates by partner organizations that are submitted as part of the SRTS application.

For-profit businesses that intend to bill for services under an approved SRTS project or activity are considered vendors and should not be listed as partners. For-profit businesses and non-profit entities are not eligible applicants for SRTS funds.

SECTION 3 – DETAILED DESCRIPTION AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Successful applicants will be required to document compliance of infrastructure improvement projects with INDOT design standards and specifications and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and the AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities are recommended sources of relevant bicycle and pedestrian facility design information.

Detailed Infrastructure Project Description and Cost:

Identify the categories that contain the work elements included in your proposed project. Provide estimated costs associated with the specific work categories. Add all costs shown and include the total at the end of Section 3. The construction total should match the "Construction" line item cost estimate shown in Section 1A, Line 5. If the amounts do not match, explain the discrepancy in Section 3. Below is a list of work categories and the typical work items contained within each category.

Sidewalk Improvements

This work category includes new sidewalks, widened sidewalks, sidewalk gap closures, significant sidewalk repairs, curb ramps, and curb and gutter if associated with sidewalk improvements serving elementary or middle schools.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Crossing Improvements

This work category includes new or upgraded traffic signals for bicyclists or pedestrians, crosswalks, median refuges, pavement markings, traffic signs, pedestrian and/or bicycle overpasses or underpasses, flashing beacons, traffic signal phasing extensions, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian activated signal upgrades, and sight distance improvements that enhance the safety of children biking or walking to school.

On-Street Bicycle Facilities

This work category is for new or upgraded bike lanes that benefit bicyclists traveling to and from school. Related geometric improvements, turning lanes, channelization, roadway realignment, traffic signs and pavement markings would also be eligible if clearly intended to improve bike lane travel to and from schools serving K-8th grades.

Traffic Diversion Improvements

This work category is intended to improve the safety of pedestrians and bicycles by removing or reducing motor vehicle traffic adjacent to school facilities, school zones or designated routes to school.

Off-Street Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

This work category includes shared-use trails or paths that serve bicyclists and pedestrians traveling to and from schools.

Traffic Calming Measures for Off-System Roads

This work category features measures that clearly benefit walking and bicycling to schools, such as curb extensions to reduce curb-to-curb crossing distances, roadway median pedestrian refuges, full and half-street closures, speed humps or speed tables, and other speed reduction techniques.

SECTION 4 – IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED WALKING AND BICYCLING ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Maps must be included with all applications and must show the location of the “target” school or schools. Please differentiate between existing and proposed safe routes. Label all streets relevant to the walking and/or bicycling routes in your application. Identify significant local features such as rivers, Interstate highways, major parks, public libraries, universities, public recreation facilities and trails or greenways.

Information about walking and bicycling routes to two different schools can be provided under this section.

SECTION 5 – IDENTIFICATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF NEEDS AND SAFETY HAZARDS

The intent of Section 5 is to establish current safety concerns. Also, this section may establish the basis for future environmental documentation required of an infrastructure improvement project.

Using quantitative data as much as possible, document any safety hazards within the project area. Annual average daily traffic (AADT) data should be provided, if available, for sections of roads recommended for improvements. Please indicate the functional classification of any routes proposed for SRTS improvements. Traffic and functional class information can often be obtained from the agency responsible for maintaining the road. Crash data may be available from law enforcement agencies.

Check boxes are provided for applicants to indicate some typical needs that SRTS improvements are intended to address.

SECTION 6 – POTENTIAL FOR PROPOSED ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS TO CORRECT OR IMPROVE THE PROBLEM

The answers to these questions will help the SRTS Advisory Committee evaluate the proposed project or activity. The information is helpful for comparing applications from around the state for selection purposes. This section is an opportunity to define how needs identified in Section 5 will be satisfied or eliminated.

SECTION 7 – POTENTIAL FOR ENCOURAGING INCREASED WALKING AND BICYCLING AMONG STUDENTS

For data gathering purposes, before completing the SRTS application, each target school must administer the new student and parent surveys found on the SRTS Web page. The student tally forms will yield the number of children currently walking and bicycling to and from school each day for a one week period. Summarizing this information should provide an average to be entered on lines 3 (walking), 4 (bicycling) and 5 (bussing). Data for four different schools can be entered under this section.

While completing this section, it could be helpful to refer to existing local or regional plans that provide support for specific bicycling or pedestrian routes. Typical sources include locally adopted comprehensive plans, thoroughfare plans, park and recreation plans, and other relevant documents. The parent surveys to be sent home with students in target schools will provide an indication of essential parental support without which SRTS programs are unlikely to succeed.

SECTION 8 – SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT BY THE COMMUNITY AND INTERESTED PARTIES

In this section you may want to discuss the effects of current and future school policies regarding walking and bicycling to school.

If other work directly affecting your Safe Routes to School activity or project is being implemented by another entity, such as an extension to another elementary or middle school or a connecting link to a significant community resource (recreation complex, library, major retail center, regional park, university), it could amplify the value of your SRTS effort and, therefore, merit documentation in this section.

Do not submit individual survey or petition forms as support material. If relevant, you may summarize survey results or petitions that support your SRTS proposal.

Any support materials received after submittal of the application will not be accepted. Since total length of the application cannot exceed 20 pages, the value of support material needs to be carefully weighed.

SECTION 9 – COORDINATION WITH A COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY PLAN

In this section, if your community has a comprehensive “Traffic Safety Plan”, discuss whether the proposed Safe Routes to School activity or infrastructure project stems from that plan. Through a broad based coordinated effort, a “comprehensive traffic safety plan” typically identifies specific traffic-related safety actions, problems and locations in a community. Those locations could be near to private or public schools and the actions could consist of education, enforcement or encouragement activities targeting elementary or middle schools.

SECTION 10 - COORDINATION WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES

Activities, programs and developments that relate to or support your Safe Routes to School proposal should be reported in this section. Typical related activities might be a downtown redevelopment project that caters to pedestrians or a community program aimed at increasing physical activity and personal health. Applicants could also document a nearby residential development that incorporates facilities for bicycling and walking that could be used for school trips. A park and recreation plan that encourages walking and bicycling in the community can also provide proof of local commitment to non-motorized travel and improved community health.